



SAN BERNARDINO COURTHOUSE

351 N. Arrowhead Ave. Room 326
Monday through Friday
San Bernardino, CA 92415
Phone: 909-387-3060
Fax: 909-387-3927

RANCHO CUCAMONGA COURTHOUSE

8303 N. Haven Ave.
Basement Level
Mondays and Wednesdays
Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730
(909) 948-4679

VICTORVILLE COURTHOUSE

14455 CIVIC DRIVE
Tuesday, Thursday and Friday
Victorville, CA 92392
(760) 243-8757

JOSHUA TREE COURTHOUSE

6527 White Feather Road
Fourth Friday of the Month Only
Joshua Tree, CA 92252

Office Hours

8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

UPDATED 7/2006

**CHILD WITNESS
TO
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**



**FAMILY LAW
FACILITATION
CENTER**

CHILD WITNESS TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND CHILDREN

(Lemon, N. 1995 Domestic Violence: Resolving Custody and Visitation Disputes. Family Violence Prevention Fund)

THE EXTENT OF ABUSE ON CHILDREN

- Researchers estimate the extent of overlap between wife assault and a child physical or sexual abuse to be approximately 30% to 40%. (Jaffe, P.; Wolfe, D. and Wilson, S. 1990)
- Forty-three percent of women in a shelter had children who were victims of abuse by the same offender. (Roy, M. Ed. 1977).
- Forty-five percent of the children of battered women are physically abused. (Roy M., Ed. 1977).
- Girls are five to six times more likely to be sexually abused by domestically violent fathers than by non-battering fathers. (Bowker, L. 1988)

CHILDREN AND THE CYCLE OF ABUSE

- Sometimes children are used as a weapon by the perpetrator against the victim (i.e. child physically injured when

thrown at the victim; or child abused as a way to coerce the victim to do certain things, etc.)

- Sometimes children are accidentally injured when the batterer is assaulting the victim.
- Children may be used in the abuse of the other parent.
- Children may be used to interrogate the victim's activities. The child may be taken away after each violent episode to ensure that the abused party will not flee the abuser.
- Children may be held hostage or abducted in efforts to punish the victim or to gain the victim's compliance.

EFFECTS OF ABUSE ON THE CHILDREN

- Research reveals that children who witness domestic violence are affected in the same way as children who are physically and sexually abused. (Goodman, G. and Rosenberg, M. 1986)
- Some visitation periods become nightmares for the children either because of physical abuse by the perpetrator or because of the psychological abuse that results from the abuser interrogating the children about the activities of the victims.
- Cognitive, psychological and physical symptoms related to effects of abuse include; eating/sleeping disorders, aggressive acting out/destructive rages, school problems, suicidal ideation, etc.

- Male children in particular are affected and have a high likelihood of battering intimates in their adult relationships. (Hotelling, G.T. and Sugarman, D.B. 1966)
- Young children may have misplaced perceptions by incorrectly seeing themselves as the cause of the perpetrator's violence against the intimate partner.

REFERENCES

- Goodman, G. and Rosenberg, M.
"The Child Witness to Family Violence; Clinical and Legal Considerations." In Sonkin, D., Ed. Domestic Violence on Trial; Psychological and Legal Dimensions of Family Violence. New York:Springer, 1987.
- Hotelling, G. T. and Sugarman, D.B.,
"An Analysis of Risk Markers in Husband to Wife Violence; The Current State of Knowledge." Violence and Victims, 1(2), 101-124, 1986.
- Jaffe, P., Wolfe, D. and Wilson, S.,
Children of Battered Women. Newbury Park, CA Sage Publication, 1990.
- Roy, M., Ed., Batter Women: A psychological Study of Domestic Violence. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1977.